

Homeland Security Update...



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Better Coordination, Improved Communication at National Security Special Events

Secretary Ridge announced last month that high-profile events over the summer, such as the Republican and Democratic National Conventions, could present attractive targets for terrorist activity. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has forged an integrated security plan to counter these potential terrorist threats. Starting this week, this plan will be activated at the G-8 Summit in Sea Island, Georgia.

At the G-8 Summit, the many components of DHS will work collaboratively to provide a heightened level of security to deter and respond to threats. These DHS components include:

- Secret Service
- Immigration and Customs Enforcement
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Coast Guard
- Customs and Border Protection
- Transportation Security Administration
- Information Analysis and Protection Directorate.

Together, these DHS entities will spearhead implementation of an operational security plan encompassing everything from processing international visitors and securing waterfront areas to facilitating information sharing among DHS components and state and local partners.

The key enabler of this operational security strategy is an internet-based counterterrorism communications system to be used by homeland security officials, as well as first responders, during G-8 Summit events. This system, connected with DHS' Homeland Security Operations Center, will allow federal, state, and local officials to collect and disseminate information as needed in real-time.

Through coordinated planning and information sharing across institutional boundaries and levels of government, the Department of Homeland Security will leverage existing strengths in order to fulfill its mission to prevent, protect, and respond to terrorist threats. The Committee fully supports these efforts and will follow closely the Department's progress in implementing these collaborative efforts.

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